

PUBLIC INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION SERVICES (PICS)

NIH-TASK ORDER

RFTOP# 107

TITLE: Genelink

PART I - REQUEST FOR TASK ORDER (TO) PROPOSALS

A. Point of Contact Name: Peggy Mills - Phone: (301) 435-0351 Fax: (301) 480-3430

Proposal Address:

Peggy Mills, Contracting Officer
6701 Rockledge Drive, MSC 7902
Rockledge II Building, Room 6128
Bethesda MD 20892-7902

Billing Address:

Peggy Mills, Contracting Officer
6701 Rockledge Drive, MSC 7902
Rockledge II Building, Room 6128
Bethesda MD 20892-7902

B. PROPOSED PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE: Three years from the date of award. The target award date is April 1, 2003.

C. PRICING METHOD: Cost-Reimbursement. The Government anticipates awarding one contract as a result of this RFTOP.

D. PROPOSAL INSTRUCTIONS: The response to this RFTOP must be prepared in two parts: a "Technical Proposal" and a "Business Proposal." An original and twenty (20) copies of the technical proposal, an original and ten (10) copies of the business proposal, and a computer disk using the Excel based NIH spreadsheet must be submitted with the proposals, to the address listed above. The technical portion of the proposal must not exceed 25 pages in length, excluding any attachments.

The offeror must identify a senior company official on the cover page of the proposals, including a name, telephone number, facsimile number, e-mail address, the name and address of the company, the title of the project (Genelink), the task order proposal number, and the date of submission. The official's signature will provide evidence of the offeror's commitment to the task order proposals submitted in response to this announcement.

If you have any questions regarding this RFTOP, please contact the Contracting Officer, Peggy Mills, at pm39m@nih.gov or submit your questions via facsimile at 301-480-3430. Collect calls will not be accepted. The submission of the proposals using facsimile or electronic mail is not authorized.

E. RESPONSE DUE DATE: **Friday, January 3, 2003 at 4:00 PM Eastern time.**

F. TASK DESCRIPTION: See Statement of Work, Attachment 1.

GENELINK Statement of Work

a. General Description of the Required Objective and Desired Results

The overall goal of this contract is to promote a collaborative approach to gene finding in NHLBI funded family studies, thereby fully utilizing existing data and increasing the yield and reliability of linkage results for pursuing fine mapping, gene identification and gene characterization. This contract will contribute to this goal by providing the infrastructure to 1) promote sharing results of linkage analyses, 2) facilitate data sharing and pooling among genetic linkage studies, and 3) provide a forum for development of collaborative studies to followup linkage analyses. We expect that within three years, as a result of this contract, we will have: (1) a dynamic website for sharing of pre and post-publication data and results among NHLBI funded investigators, (2) a forum for open discussion of collaborative efforts to pursue the genetics of complex HLB disorders and (3) several new collaborative genetic research efforts among the participating NHLBI studies. The ultimate result of this program will be to increase the scientific yield from NHLBI linkage studies.

b. Background Information

Recent articles in prominent scientific journals highlight the adverse impact of “data hoarding” on progress in the field of genetics. In addition, the mounting frustration over the number of published linkage results that have been difficult to replicate indicate that multiple and collaborative strategies will be necessary to confirm linkage results. Experience with ongoing family studies indicates there is a great opportunity for collaboration among these studies to replicate linkage findings, as well as pursue fine mapping and gene identification. As a result, the NHLBI staff organized an NHLBI Workshop to Facilitate Collaboration of Linkage Results for Complex Heart, Lung and Blood Disorders which was held July 9-10, 2001. The workshop participants made several recommendations on structuring a collaborative approach and were quite enthusiastic about pursuing collaborative efforts to find genes influencing heart, lung, blood and sleep disorders. Such efforts require infrastructure, support and organization from an impartial source. Experience from the International Type 2 Diabetes Linkage Analysis Consortium, the International Consortium on Asthma Genetics (COAG) and ADIMAP (NIDDK obesity collaborative gene mapping project) has shown that additional funds and central, impartial organization are necessary to move collaborative genetic analyses forward in a timely manner.

c. Detailed Description of Technical Requirements

The overall goal of this program is to provide the infrastructure to promote sharing of genetic study results and collaboration in the identification of genes influencing heart, lung, blood and sleep disorders. The specific objectives that will lead to this goal are: (1) organization and support for meetings of NHLBI investigators to share results and (2) development and maintenance of a web site to enable sharing of genetic results and data among NHLBI investigators, and (3) administration of subcontracts to participating investigators to cover the cost of preparing and sharing data sets for GENELINK.

Specific Objectives:

1. Support for annual two day meetings in Bethesda, MD of representatives from the 15-20 participating studies. The meeting will run from 8AM-5PM one day and 8AM-12 noon on the second day.

Tasks and Subtasks The contractor will be responsible for all activities related to the workshop including, but not limited to:

- Planning: The contractor shall meet with the project office at the office of the project officer for approximately 3-4 hours to discuss and clarify issues related to organization and planning of the GENELINK meetings.
- Scheduling: The Contractor shall work with the Project office to poll participants for availability for meetings and schedule annual meetings when an appropriate number of participants are available.
- Conference call activities: The contractor shall be responsible for coordinating and scheduling one conference call with representatives from the majority of the participating studies (20 participants) per year. This conference call should be scheduled approximately mid way between annual meetings. In addition approximately two conference calls of smaller groups of participants (8-10 phone lines) will be scheduled each year as needed. The contractor shall be responsible for taking and distributing minutes from all conference calls.
- Travel Arrangements: The contractor shall be responsible for providing travel, hotel and per diem reimbursements for approximately 30-40 participants for 2 nights and 1.5 days. The contractor will work directly with the travelers to ensure that all necessary arrangements are made, confirmed and understood by all parties. All lodging and per diem shall be contracted at rates in accordance with Federal Travel Regulations.
- Meeting Information: The letter of invitation to the meetings will be prepared by the NHLBI Project Office. The contractor will be responsible for sending the letter, accompanied by information on financial arrangements, hotel information and directions from the airport and by car.
- Meeting Services: Providing services necessary to conduct the meetings including but not limited to the meeting room, microphones, pointers, LCD, slide and/or overhead projectors, internet connections, and access to phone lines.
- Communications: Establishing and arranging for a message center for the duration of the meetings.
- Food Service Coordination: Arranging for and coordinating food/beverage services including a light breakfast (coffee, pastries and fruit) and afternoon drinks, cookies and fruit during the first day of the meeting. On the first day of the meetings the contractor shall make arrangements for a catered working lunch in the meeting room. The contractor shall also make arrangements for an informal group dinner at a local restaurant.
- Printed Meeting Materials: The contractor shall be responsible for drafting, developing and distributing meeting materials including but not limited to the meeting agenda, participant information packets, briefing materials, name tags etc. (desktop printing only, no government printing clearance required).
- Equipment Operations: The contractor shall be responsible for providing and operating audio and taping equipment.
- Documenting Meeting Proceedings: The contractor shall be responsible for recording discussions, taking notes during the meeting and summarizing proceedings.
- Meeting Minutes: The contractor shall be responsible for drafting and finalizing (in consultation with the Project Office) the proceedings of each meeting
- Materials Distribution: The contractor shall be responsible for distribution of both electronic

and hard copies of meeting minutes.

Deliverables specific to tasks and subtasks #1

- The contractor shall provide a summary of annual meeting proceedings within 30 days of the meeting.
- The contractor shall provide minutes from conference calls within 14 days of conference call date.
- The contractor shall provide documentation of meeting schedule, location and hotel/meeting room arrangements within one month of contract start and within one month of contract anniversary thereafter.
- The contractor shall provide documentation of conference call schedules 30 days in advance of scheduled conference calls.

2. Development and maintenance of website for sharing of pre- and post-publication linkage data and results among NHLBI funded investigators. Development of the website will include incorporation of existing statistical programming written using SAS/IntrNet. The program code will be provided by participants from the GENELINK group.

Tasks and Subtasks The contractor will be responsible for all activities related to the website including, but not limited to:

- Website Design: Designing and incorporating state-of-the-art methodology including, but not limited to: a search engine for the site, text, color graphics, movable icons, images, image maps, downloadable items, controls (i.e. print buttons, arrows, etc.), links to other appropriate web sites and use of color to indicate previously visited links, functions to identify newly added data and features, interactive capabilities including the ability to receive and refer feedback to the Project Officer, and counter/tracking. (Final decisions as to whether all or some will be included will be made by the Project Office.)
- Graphic Design: Designing new graphics or icons that can complement the content of the web site.
- Data Storage and retrieval: Provide, either by design and/or modification of an existing system, a web-based computer research data storage system that will receive, inventory, store and display information from the Centers. This task will include working with GENELINK participants to incorporate existing SAS/IntrNet programming into a web tool to display comparative and combined linkage analysis results.
- Information Processing: Receiving, soliciting, writing, editing, clearing, and posting material on the web site. Overseeing the placement and posting of documents.
- Visual Design: Providing a consistent visual style that will give users a sense of unity and reinforce the user's experience.
- Layout Design: Providing layout elements that will allow users to quickly identify new content and allowing users to go directly to new information.
- Data Sharing: Work with Centers to assist in data sharing issues with the goal of integrating results and making them readily available to the GENELINK group.
- Website Organization: Working with the Project Office and GENELINK scientists to organize and present the content of the web site in effective and aesthetically pleasing ways.

- Website Content: Implementing GENELINK scientists' ideas regarding additions and augmentation of website content and tools.
- Statistical Programming: Providing programming for online database and statistical systems, including SAS Intr/Net programming.
- Access to Materials: Providing an alternate form of all documents, resources, or files that can be printed in their entirety.
- Security Plan: Developing and implementing a security plan and quality assurance plan for the web site, including password protected access for participants.
- Website Implementation: Implementing the website plan. Ensuring software, links and other aspects of the website are fully functions and installed on a secure server which is easily accessible to the GENELINK participants.
- Website Testing and Maintenance: Developing and implementing a plan for regular, ongoing usability testing to produce a web site that is easy and satisfying to use.
- Tracking Website Use: Analyzing server logs and other information to determine patterns of use and other trends and making changes to the site in response to these patterns and trends.
- Technical maintenance: Keeping abreast of web technical developments to ensure that the best, most current technologies and practices are implemented, including web authoring tools, html standards, browser standards, and other web technology.
- Policy Development: Working with the Project Office to develop policies and strategies for the site.
- Intellectual Property / Confidentiality: All data, results and programming provided by GENELINK participants must be kept strictly confidential and may not be used for any purpose not specifically outlined in this contract.

Deliverables specific to tasks and subtasks #2

- The contractor shall provide a site map within 30 days of first meeting.
- The contractor shall provide design guidelines and page templates for all pages of the website within 6 months of first meeting.
- The contractor shall implement the website plan, including all statistical software, graphical interfaces, links and shared linkage data on a secure server which is accessible to GENELINK participants within 12 months of the effective date of the award.
- The contractor shall turn over the programming plan, the web site, program code and its contents within 30 days of the close of the contract.
- The contractor shall provide a security and quality assurance plan for the web site within six months of the first meeting. These plans shall be approved by the Project Office prior to building the website.

3. Administration of subcontracts for shared data set development.

Tasks and Subtasks The contractor shall administer subcontracts to each of the GENELINK participants (up to 20 total) to cover the costs of shared data set development, travel to meetings and associated costs of collaborating. The contractor will be responsible for all activities related to GENELINK including, but not limited to:

- Program Management: Providing a project manager for the period of performance of this

contract who shall serve as the principal point of contact with the Project Office and who shall be responsible for preparing reports and plans, supervising project staff, issuing assignments, monitoring contract progress, and maintaining budget control.

- Administrative Plan: Developing, implementing, and maintaining a project management and administrative plan that can both forecast and report information regarding staff time and resources allocated and used for each subcontract. Subcontracting costs, both direct and indirect, shall be reported in the financial documents. This information shall be made readily available when requested by the NHLBI.
- Subcontract Administration: Managing subcontracts for GENELINK. After award of the contract, the contractor will collaborate and cooperate with the NHLBI Contract Office in establishing these subcontracts for each of the 15-20 participating groups.
- Monitoring Progress: Monitoring the progress of collaboration and quality of data.
- Data Transfer Procedures: Designing procedures for electronic transfer of data between each of the centers.
- Publications Database: Developing and maintaining a publications and presentations data base. Elements are to include but not necessarily limited to title, author, co-authors, manuscript proposal date, date for completion, submission date to study review committee(s), submission date to journal, status of manuscript with the journal, publication date, date of presentation, and title of meeting and publication citation.
- Directory: Developing and updating as needed a unified study directory of telephone numbers, fax numbers, and e-mail addresses for Center investigators and staff, Progress Review Panel members, and NHLBI Program and Contracts staff.

Deliverables specific to tasks and subtasks #3

- The contractor shall distribute one hard copy of the directory to each Center and NHLBI staff within 30 days of the award of the subcontracts.
- The contractor shall distribute the directory to each Center, and NHLBI staff in a variety of electronic formats that can be imported into the users' local systems within 30 days of the award of the subcontracts.

Deliverables for all tasks

- The contractor shall provide an annual report of meeting activities and accomplishments of the previous contract year as well as user metrics (i.e. number of hits, number of views, most frequently viewed pages, etc.) and trends for the web site. The Annual Report will cover 12 calendar months and shall be submitted on or before the 30th calendar day following the end of the reporting period.
- The contractor shall provide semi-annual reports summarizing key activities that were completed or in progress during the preceding six months including general progress in activities of the subcontracts and administrative issues; personnel with FTE level for the reporting period; changes in personnel; specific problems encountered or anticipated and attempts to resolve such problems; and progress in publications activities, including an updated list of ongoing and completed manuscripts (not to exceed 4 pages) within ten days after the end of the six month period.
- The contractor shall submit monthly invoices (3 copies). Use Standard Form 1034, "Public

- Voucher for Purchases and Services Other than Personal,” or the equivalent.
- The contractor shall submit a draft of the final report 30 days before the contract expires, documenting and summarizing the results of the entire contract work, including recommendations and conclusions based on both the contractor’s general experience and special viewpoint not to exceed ten (10) pages.
 - The contractor shall submit the final report, due on or before expiration of the contract, documenting and summarizing the results of the entire contract work, including recommendations and conclusions based on both the contractor’s general experience and special viewpoint not to exceed ten (10) pages.

The items specified for delivery below are subject to the review and approval of the Project Officer before final acceptance. The contractor shall be required to make revisions deemed necessary by the Project Officer.

All products produced for this project will be the property of the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, National Institutes of Health. How the products are used and distributed shall be the option of the Federal Government.

Time line for activities and deliverables

Activity	Deliverable	Month(s) after Contract Award
Award subcontracts		1
	Hard copy of participant directory	1
	Electronic participant directory	1
Hold 1 st mtg.		within 6
	Web site map	7
	Security and quality assurance plan for web site	9
	Design guidelines and page templates for all pages of website	9
	Website implementation	12
Hold 2 nd mtg.		18
Hold 3 rd mtg.		30
	Draft of final report	One month prior to the close of the contract period
	Final report	At the close of the contract period
	Programming plan, web site, program code, and its contents	Within one month of the close of the contract period.
	*Financial reports	Monthly
	*Semi-annual progress report	Within 10 days after the end of the six month period
	*Annual report	On or before the 30 th calendar day following the end of the reporting period
	*Documentation of meeting schedule, location, and hotel/meeting room arrangements	Within one month of contract start date and within one month of contract anniversary thereafter
	*Annual meeting proceedings.	Within 30 days of meeting date
*Schedule conference calls		As needed

	*Documentation of conference call schedules	30 days in advance of conference call
	*Minutes from conference calls	Within 14 days of call date

*Recurrent

G. EVALUATION CRITERIA:

EVALUATION CRITERIA - GENELINK

The technical proposal will receive paramount consideration in the selection of the Contractor for this acquisition. All evaluation factors, other than cost or price, when combined are significantly more important than cost or price. However, cost/price may become a critical factor in source selection in the event that two or more offerors are determined to be essentially equal following the evaluation of all factors other than cost or price. Although past performance and small and small disadvantaged subcontracting are not a specific evaluation criteria, the interrelationship of the offeror's technical proposal, past performance and small and small disadvantaged subcontracting and their proposed costs will be assessed. In any event, the Government reserves the right to make an award to that offeror whose proposal provides the best overall value to the Government, cost and other factors considered.

The evaluation will be based on the demonstrated capabilities of the offeror in relation to the needs of the project as set forth in the RFTOP. The merits of the proposal will be evaluated carefully, based on the thoroughness and feasibility of the technical approach taken.

The Government reserves the right to make an award without further discussion of the proposals received. Therefore, it is important that your proposal be submitted initially on the most favorable terms, and should include a detailed budget. Proposals submitted in response to this solicitation will be reviewed by a review group within NHLBI.

This RFTOP does not commit the Government to pay any cost for the preparation and submission of a proposal. In addition, the Contracting Officer is the only individual who can legally commit the Government to the expenditure of public funds in connection with this proposed acquisition.

Evaluation Criteria:

Technical Approach (40%)

The contractor must propose a plan for meeting the goals, expectations, and technical aspects of the organization, web site development and maintenance and web server hosting, and administration of subcontracts. This includes creative and innovative statistical and database management approaches, the assignment of tasks to experienced personnel, and knowledge of what problems are likely to be encountered and proposed means of solving such problems. The proposal will be evaluated according to the soundness, practicality, and feasibility of the written description. The proposal should fully

address the aspects of performing each requirement, including a work plan, project schedules, milestones, and deliverables.

Personnel (25%)

The contractor must demonstrate experience and qualifications of key personnel in supporting the planning and implementation of activities described in the task order. The summaries should highlight experience such as coordinating travel and meetings, audio/video production, managing subcontracts, user interface design, web production and technology, evaluation design and methodology, experience with the proposed technical approach and experience designing, building, evaluating, maintaining web sites, especially scientific web sites. The contractor should have access to expertise in statistics and/or genetic epidemiology, database development and statistical programming using SAS.

The contractor shall provide a staffing plan, including proposed FTEs and a management plan that describes the contractor's approach to managing work, including a backup plan in the event that key personnel are absent.

Management Experience (25%)

The contractor must demonstrate experience related to the work outlined in this task order, including managing projects of similar size, content and scope. No more than five relevant projects demonstrating the contractor's experience should be provided.

The contractor's management capability will be evaluated on the adequacy of the proposed management plan, which should show clear lines of authority and responsibility, and quality control procedures to assure project goals and milestones are met in a timely manner.

Facilities and Equipment (10%)

The contractor shall provide documentation of computer and office equipment and facilities to be used for this contract including but not limited to computer workstations, a secure server, software, office space, telephones, a copying machine, and a facsimile machine.

Task Order # 107

TITLE: Genelink

PART II-CONTRACTOR'S REPLY: CONTRACT #263-01-D-0

Contractor:

Address:

Points of Contact:

Phone:

Fax:

TOTAL ESTIMATED COST: \$

Pricing Method: Cost-Reimbursement

PROPOSED COMPLETION DATE:

FOR THE CONTRACTOR:

Signature

Date

=====

SOURCE SELECTION:

WE HAVE REVIEWED ALL SUBMITTED PROPOSALS AND HAVE DETERMINED THIS FIRM SUBMITTED THE BEST OVERALL PROPOSAL AND THE PRICE/COST IS REASONABLE:

Billing Reference # _____

Appropriations Data: _____

RECOMMENDED:

FAX #

Signature-Project Officer

Date

APPROVED:

FAX #

Signature-Contracting Officer

Date

NIH APPROVAL--

CONTRACTOR SHALL NOT EXCEED THE ESTIMATED TASK ORDER AMOUNT WITHOUT THE WRITTEN APPROVAL OF THE CONTRACTING OFFICER AND ICS COORDINATOR

APPROVED:

Anthony M. Revenis, J.D., NIH PICS Coordinator

Date